American Optometric Association

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NEWS

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President signs bill to restore Medicare physician payments

On Feb. 8, President George W. Bush signed legislation (S. 1932) overturning the 4.4 percent cut in Medicare physician fees that took effect with the start of this year.

Provisions to rescind the Medicare physician pay cut were included in the Deficit Reduction Act, introduced by Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH) last year and signed by the president this month.

AOA is part of a broad coalition of health care provider groups (including the American Medical Association) that made legislation to rescind the 4.4 percent pay reduction a top priority.

"This legislation means Medicare physician services provided during 2006 will be reimbursed at the same level as 2005," said AOA President Richard Wallingford, O.D.

Thanks to provisions added to the legislation, the restoration of Medicare physician reimbursement rates will be made retroactive to the start of the year.

The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has announced it will reprocess any claims already paid at the lower rates and adjust reimbursements to the 2005 level.

Health care providers will not have to resubmit Medicare claims for reprocessing in order to obtain the reimbursement at the higher rate, the AOA Advocacy Group emphasizes.

Since Jan. 1, Medicare claims for physician fees will have reflected a reduction of 4.4 percent from their 2005 level, as the result of an annual Congressionally mandated update in Medicare fee levels, determined by a formula set down in federal law.

With the new law, the 4.4 percent fee reduction will be removed and claims will be paid at the 2005 level.

CMS has changed its claims-processing software to eliminate the 4.4 percent reduction and allow services to be paid at the higher level," the AOA Advocacy Group noted in the AOA NewsLetter, AOA's new e-mail member news service, sent earlier this month.

"Based on the pending legislation, the effective date for the removal of the 4.4 percent reduction is Jan. 1, 2006. Thus, all 2006 claims submitted prior to the enactment of the legislation will be reprocessed and adjusted to the 2005 rate," the AOA NewsLetter notice continued.

CMS plans to automatically reprocess all of the 2006 claims submitted prior to the legislation's enactment and provide physicians with the additional amount in a bulk check.

Optometrists will not be required to resubmit these claims.

Given the large number of claims that will require reprocessing, it may take several months for physicians to receive their single bulk check.

"CMS expects that the payment in the bulk check will be mapped to the original claims sub-

see Payments, page 10

Dorothy Hitchmoth, O.D., raises a point during discussions of the future needs of eye care patients at the second Optometry 2020 Summit earlier this month.

Optometry 2020 attendees forge vision of the future

There is no doubt that the future is coming. For 250 optometrists, students, paraoptometrics and industry and academic experts meeting earlier this month, the question was: *What is the preferred future for the profession?*

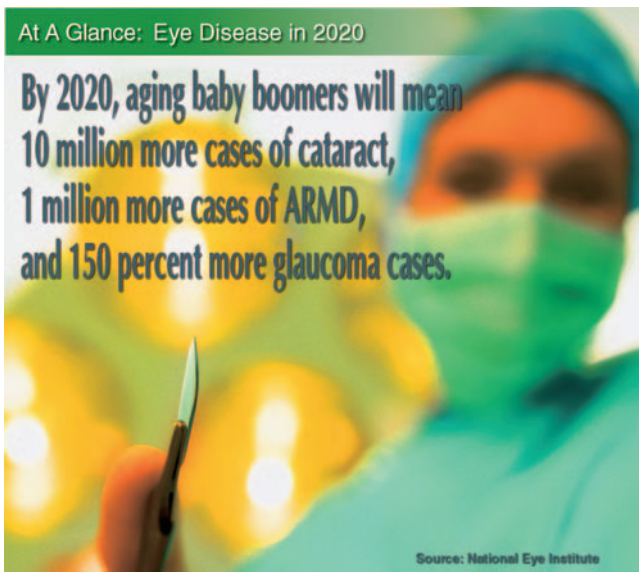
The attendees were asked to look toward the year 2020 and create statements that would be "desired states" in that year.

At this month's Optometry 2020 Summit meeting, the group forged consensus on 48 statements that most mirror their hopes and dreams for the profession.

As professional futurist Peter Bishop, who counseled the groups, put it, the desired states should be "barely feasible." Such a goal would ensure that the groups are aiming high enough, and dreaming big.

"This Summit is a continuation of a

see Future, page 17



Inside

Glance at the States, Page 7

Optometry's Meeting™, Page 14

Meetings, Page 21

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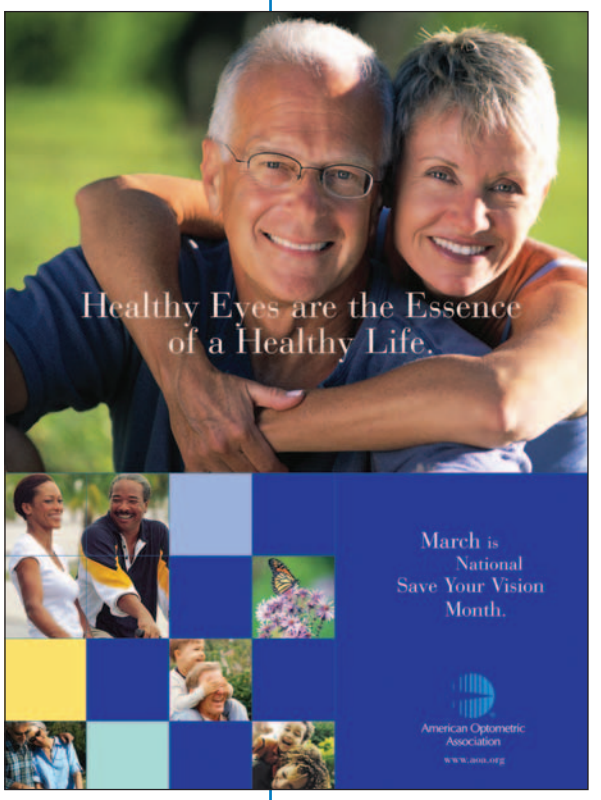
AOA offers resources about baby boomers for Save Your Vision Month



An estimated 2.8 million baby boomers will turn 60 this year, signaling an increase in age-related eye disease and highlighting the importance of focusing March's Save Your Vision Month on the eye and vision health of this generation.

"This year, Save Your Vision Month's goal is increasing awareness of age-related eye disorders to the aging baby boomer population," said Richard Edlow, O.D., AOA Information & Data Committee chair. "If we accomplish that, we've done a great job."

Many age-related vision problems strike without symptoms, emphasizing the need for regular eye exams and early detection, which can slow the progression of eye disease and maximize remaining vision.

"Open-angle glaucoma, for example, is totally without symptoms and totally pain-free," said Dr. Edlow.

"Screening can make all the difference in the world.

Epidemiologically, Hispanics and African-Americans have a higher prevalence of glaucoma. I had a patient who never had an exam and spent 10 years with undetected glaucoma. Now he can't drive. If an eye exam had been done early on, all of this could have been prevented," he said.

Low vision, which describes vision loss that cannot be restored with conventional spectacles, contact lenses, drug therapy or surgery, affects 16.5 million people, most of them over 60.

The vast majority of people with low vision are unaware of services and devices that could help them improve the quality of their lives.

Save Your Vision Month aims to inform baby boomers of the resources that are available to them to promote the health of their eyes.

"It's imperative that all optometrists do the best job possible of making their communities aware of the proper care of age-related disorders, including their current patient base," said Dr. Edlow. "Additionally, anything done at the state level would be invaluable."

AOA's Clinical Practice Guidelines recommend that adults between the ages of 40 and 60 receive a comprehensive eye exam every two years, and adults over 60 receive an annual exam.

Individuals now wearing contact lenses or spectacles should have their eyes checked once a year.

"A lot of eye conditions become more notable at age 60 and beyond," said Dr. Edlow. "It's the responsibility of both doctors and organizations, such as the AOA, to get the word out."

The Save Your Vision Month campaign stresses that optometrists can detect diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma and treat them in conjunction with other health care providers.

Many people are unaware that, in some cases, eye exams can detect diseases such as diabetes and hypertension that affect the whole body.

As part of the campaign, optometrists can request a complimentary Save Your Vision Month member kit.

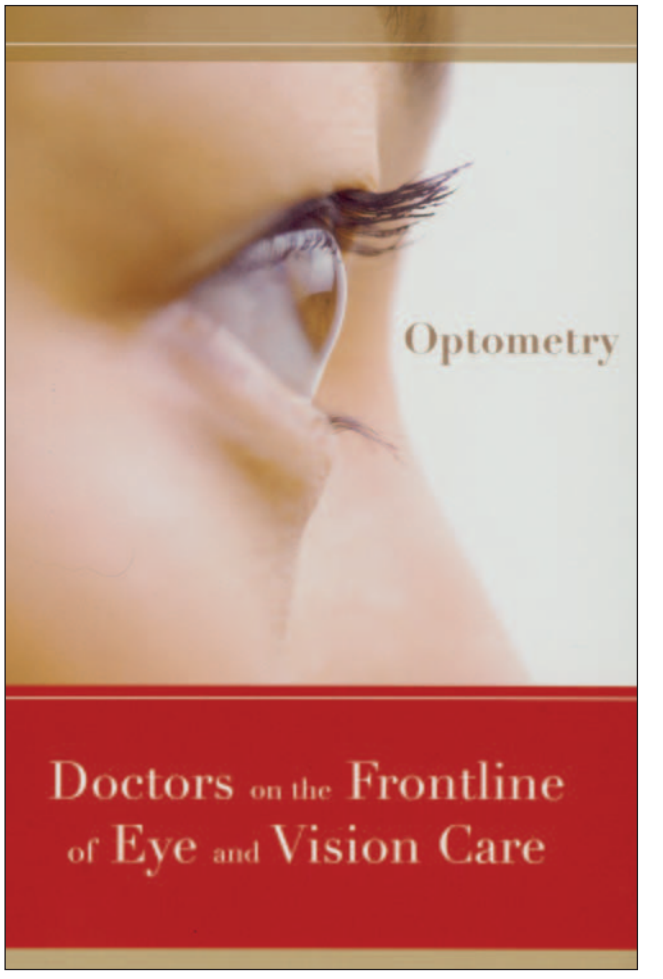
Doctors can use the kits to communicate with local media and patients.

A "Dear Journalist" Letter/ Introduction to Campaign and a news release are specifically designed to be sent to local newspapers.

The following one-page inserts are included for patient information:

- Baby Boomer's Checklist for Healthy Vision (padded in quantities of 50)
- Baby Boomers and Vision Aging fact sheet
- Eye Disease Management fact sheet (padded in quantities of 50 for distribution)

For more information, or to order, e-mail *publicrelations@aoa.org* or call Julie Mahoney at (800) 365-2219, ext. 176.



Optometrists on the frontline

A new brochure, describing the scope of practice and education of optometrists has just been printed by AOA. Look for details on the availability in the coming months.

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Barrett files for AOA trustee

Lee Ann Barrett, O.D., has filed for the AOA position of trustee.

Dr. Barrett is currently a member of the AOA Communications Group Advisory Committee.

She is a past member of the Health Promotion Disease Prevention Committee, the Legislative Defense Fund Project Team, the Nominating Committee, and the Resolutions Committee, of which she is also a past chair.

Dr. Barrett is currently the AOA Keyperson Coordinator for the Missouri Optometric Association (MOA) and is the editor of the *Vision* newsletter.

In addition to serving as the MOA president from 2000-2001, Dr. Barrett served as chair for several committees.

Dr. Barrett is in her fifth year as clinical director for the Special Olympics Lions Club International Opening Eyes program.

She was the president of the North Central States Optometric Council from 2003-2004.

Dr. Barrett was on the University of Missouri—St. Louis College of Optometry Board for eight years and served as chair from 1996-1998.

Dr. Barrett's awards include: Heart of America Contact Lens Society OD of the Year in 2006, Missouri Optometric Association OD of the Year in 2002, and University of Missouri—St. Louis Distinguished Alumni in 1999.

Dr. Barrett has a private practice in Columbia, MO, and resides in Boonville, MO, with her husband, Robert, and son, Alexander.

Lee Ann Barrett, O.D.

Conversation with patient leads to InfantSEE™ video on WebMD

Early last fall, Sharon Berger, O.D., of Roswell, GA, alerted one of her patients to the InfantSEE™ program.

The patient, Sandy LaMott, was a film director hoping to interview Dr. Berger about vision therapy for WebMD.

LaMott's son had received vision therapy years ago, and she thought that would be a good story for WebMD.

"As we spent time together filming in my office, I shared with her the InfantSEE™ program, which had just been launched," said Dr. Berger, who is the co-chair for InfantSEE™ in Georgia. "She thought that too would make a great story."

As a parent whose child had been diagnosed with an eye condition, LaMott understood the importance of eye care for young children.

As a director, she recognized a good opportunity to share that awareness with other parents.

Dr. Berger and her partner, Jennifer Dattolo, O.D., agreed to be filmed and interviewed while performing an InfantSEE™ assessment.

"We are trying to raise the public awareness of the importance of an infant's eye exam," said Dr. Berger. "As the InfantSEE™ assessment is offered at no charge, it gets the message out without being self-serving. Having been in practice for 26 years, I've seen many patients with amblyopia that had passed their screenings and didn't know they had lazy eye. This assessment is helpful to detect amblyopia, as well as many other eye conditions."

Dr. Berger also stressed the importance of AOA members continuing to register as InfantSEE™ doctors.

"It's not a big time-consumer, but it's highly rewarding," she said. "The parents are so appreciative."

The video news story featuring Drs. Berger and Dattolo debuted on the WebMD Web site Jan. 26. The segment will prominently appear in March as the main package for Vision Month.

The InfantSEE™ feature will remain on the WebMD Web site for one year. After that time, the editorial board will continue reviewing the segment and allow it to remain on the site as long as the information is deemed valid.

To view the feature, visit *www.webmd.com/content/pages/24/112716.htm*.

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Affiliates update fellow state optometric associations on status of recovery

Many members along the Gulf and Florida coasts are still struggling to resume normal lives following last year's record-breaking hurricane season.

At the AOA Presidents' Council last month, ODs from Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas described the status of recovery in their states, with Louisiana, Mississippi and Florida describing programs that allow ODs nationwide to pitch in to help.

Brian Blount, O.D., formerly of Beaumont, TX, uses the length of his beard to measure the slow pace of relief efforts following Hurricane Rita.

It appears that every OD who practiced in Mississippi before Hurricane Katrina struck has resumed practice in some form.

"It may not be in the mode they would choose, or the number of hours they would like, but they are all practicing in the state," said Amy Crigler, O.D.

However, in Louisiana, a substantial number of ODs, especially those who practiced around New Orleans, have not returned, just as many New Orleans residents, who would make up their patient base, have not.

The state optometric affiliates in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida have offered dues waivers to affected members.

In order to compensate for lost revenue, and help these state affiliates in need, AOA members can become associate members. Associate members contribute dues and receive some of the same benefits offered to other members.

"If a member from Illinois wanted to help out Louisiana, as an example, they would apply for associate membership and pay dues," said Peter Kehoe, O.D., AOA secretary-treasurer. "The association would have little expense for that associate member with the exception of adding them to their mail or e-mail lists to keep them informed. The Illinois doctor could keep up on the progress of the doctors in Louisiana and know that he or she is helping an affiliate get through rough financial times."

In Florida, associate member dues are $100 per year and include the following benefits:

- Discount on annual Florida Optometric Association convention registration fees (no voting right)
- Discount on CE programming
- Open access to "members' only" section of the FOA Web site, *www.floridaeyes.org*, which provides extensive information and news for FOA members
- Receive FOA Insight E-News newsmagazine (six times per year)
- FOA member benefits on affinity endorsed programs and products
- Receive advocacy reports on Florida licensure issues
- Receive advance notice of optometric-related news and issues

For more information on becoming an associate member, call (850) 877-4697, e-mail *Ken@floridaeyes.org* or *Jessica@floridaeyes.org*, or fax (850) 878-0933. Checks can be mailed to FOA at 401 Office Plaza Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32301.

In Louisiana, where approximately 100 ODs were affected, associate membership dues are a minimum of $75 annually and include the following benefits:

- Conference registration fees same as Optometry Association of Louisiana active members
- May attend meetings and have privilege of floor (no voting right) Receive newsletter, as well as recognition of membership in newsletter.

AOA members interested in OAL associate membership can contact Executive Director James Sandefur, O.D., at (318) 335-0675 or *optla@bellsouth.net*. Checks can be mailed to the Optometry Association of Louisiana at 115 N. 13th St., Oakdale, LA 71463.

Amy Crigler, O.D., president-elect of the Mississippi Optometric Association, describes the state's condition.

In Mississippi, dues are $75 per year for an individual membership and $150 per year for a corporate membership. The following benefits are offered to associate members:

- May attend meetings (no voting, right to floor or right to hold office)
- Receive Mississippi Optometric Association newsletter
- Receive discount on registration fees and exhibition space at conferences and conventions

Interested members can mail checks to the Mississippi Optometric Association at 141 Executive Dr., Suite 5, Madison, MS 39110 or contact MOA Executive Director Linda Ross Aldy at (601) 956-7412 or *MSOptometr@aol.com*.

Dues paid to professional organizations are deductible as a business expense to the extent permitted by the Internal Revenue Code.

Paraoptometric Section to honor most active affiliate

For the second year, the AOA Paraoptometric Section (AOAPS) will honor the work done on the state level to increase state and national paraoptometric membership.

AOAPS will honor the affiliate paraoptometric association with the highest percentage of state members who are also national members at a luncheon held during Optometry's Meeting™ in June.

To be considered, affiliates must submit a list of members, including names and addresses, to AOAPS by April 30.

For more information or to submit a state membership list, contact Tarah Remington, AOAPS manager, at (800) 365-2219, ext. 222 or e-mail *TLRemington@aoa.org*.

AOAPS will also honor the recipient of the Community Service Award at the luncheon.

The award is intended to recognize paraoptometrics who donate their talents and skills to the community.

The award includes a plaque, a $100 cash award and a $100 donation to the charity of the recipient's choice.

The application deadline is April 30.

Illinois 'All Kids' set to take effect

Uninsured Illinois children can now begin applying for comprehensive health care coverage through the state's "All Kids" health insurance program, which offers families the opportunity to receive affordable health, vision and dental coverage and emphasizes preventive health care.

As the first program of its kind in the nation, however, its effect on the health care system is unknown.

The landmark coverage officially begins July 1, and is designed for families who earn too much to qualify for other public aid programs, yet not enough to afford private health insurance. The typical income range is $40,000 to $80,000 a year.

The program, introduced by Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D), "would make comprehensive health insurance available to children, including doctor's visits, hospital stays, prescription drugs, vision care, dental care and medical devices like eye glasses and asthma inhalers."

Though parents will pay premiums based on their incomes, the program is still expected to cost $45 million the first year.

A primary care case management model is intended to keep the costs of the program down. Using this model, patients will choose a single primary physician who can make referrals to specialists.

The federal All Kids Health Insurance Coverage Act of 2005, introduced by Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-IL) in December, models the Illinois legislation.

"We don't know about its impact on optometry," said Mike Horstman, Illinois Optometric Association director. "The managed care model will have a gatekeeper, so it's uncertain how this is going to work."

Horstman is also concerned about language in the legislation that allows the state to offer families with existing health insurance the option to receive limited packages that cover dental and vision benefits.

One risk is that patients may simply discontinue private vision insurance and wait for the state's to kick in, thus abusing the system, Horstman said.

"Certainly the idea of all kids getting health and vision care is great," he said. "It's just a question of impact."

The federal All Kids Health Insurance Coverage Act of 2005, introduced by Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-IL) in December, models the Illinois legislation.

The legislation (S. 2137) would expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program by eliminating the eligibility cap of 200 percent of the federal poverty level, in turn making all uninsured children eligible for coverage regardless of family income.

The bill is currently in committee.

Louise Sclafani, O.D., president of the Illinois Optometric Association, briefs members of the President's Council on the state's "All Kids" program last month.

'Caring' booklet available

For a limited time, "Caring for the Eyes of America" will be available at a reduced price.

Copies ordered by May 15, 2006, are just $229. After May 15, the price will be $279.

For AOA members, "Caring for the Eyes of America" is just $39 if ordered by May 15 and $59 after that date.

To place an order, or for more information on ordering multiple copies, contact Debra Misuraca at (800) 365-2219, ext. 238, or *DKMisuraca@aoa.org*.

Glance at the States

Third state 'private label' lens bill introduced

Alabama has become the third state to consider establishing a state contact lens formulary, following similar proposals in Indiana and Utah last month (see *AOA News*, Feb. 6).

Contact lens formulary bills were introduced in Indiana and Utah last month (see *AOA News*, Feb 6), although Utah lawmakers are already reconsidering their proposal for a state CL formulary. (See story, below.)

The AOA State Government Relations Center (AOA-SGRC) believes similar legislation will continue to surface in state legislatures around the nation.

Under the formulary proposals, manufacturers would have to certify that their contact lenses are available through distribution channels other than eye care practices—such as mail order companies, Internet retailers, pharmacies and general retailers. Lenses not certified to be available through such channels would not be listed on the formulary and could not legally be sold in the state.

The formulary proposals are being touted to state lawmakers by lobbyists representing 1-800 Contacts, the nation's largest contact lens retailers.

1-800 Contacts reportedly sees the formulary measures as a response to "private label" lens brands, which are available only through eye care practices. The retailer sees such "doctors only" lens lines as a means of restricting trade in contact lenses.

Introduced in the Alabama House (HB 544) by Rep. Mike Millican and in the Senate (SB 379) by Sen. Larry Means, the legislation is actively opposed by the Alabama Optometric Association (ALOA).

"This is an unnecessary burden on the practice of optometry and one that is unprecedented in the health care arena," ALOA declared in a statement on the association Web site. "No other medical device or prescription medication is required to be on a formulary before it can be sold."

"There are at least 80 manufacturers of contact lenses producing over 100 brands of contacts. It is unlikely that all will go through the process of certifying their brands with the State of Alabama. As a result, brands will not be available to Alabama patients. For some patients, that means they will not be able to wear contacts because the brand that meets their unique needs will not be available if this bill passes," the ALOA statement continues.

Contact lens formularies could adversely affect the availability of custom fit lenses, ALOA adds.

"Most of these lenses are made for medically necessary reasons and are specifically designed to fit an individual. Under this bill you could not prescribe custom fit lenses," the ALOA statement notes.

A Federal Trade Commission (FTC) study has concluded there is robust competition in the contact lens marketplace and that limited distribution lenses have no significant adverse effect on competition.

In Alabama, identical contact lens formulary bills have been introduced in both the state House of Representatives and the state Senate. The House version of the formulary bill has been sent to the House Health Committee, with the Senate bill sent to the Senate Health Committee.

The ALOA has requested a public hearing on both bills.

A copy of the Alabama contact lens formulary bill can be found on the ALOA's Web site (*www.alaopt.org*) under the news section.

Contact lens formulary bill advances in Utah Senate

A contact lens formulary bill advanced out of the Utah Senate Business and Labor Committee on Feb. 8.

The bill, called the Contact Lens Consumer Protection Act within the Utah Optometry Practice Act, would limit prescribing, marketing, selling and certifying contact lenses.

"This latest bill would require a manufacturer to certify lenses with the attorney general's office," said Lincoln Dygert, O.D., legislative vice president, Utah Optometric Association. "If they chose not to certify a lens, it would limit a practitioner's ability to prescribe the lens that best meets the patient's needs."

The bill calls for a contact lens formulary that specifies that all optometrists and ophthalmologists "may not include a brand of contact lenses on a contact lens prescription unless the lens is certified as being available in a commercially reasonable and nondiscriminatory manner directly to and generally within all alternative channels of distribution."

Dr. Dygert stressed that the association is still negotiating with the bill's sponsor, Sen. Curtis Bramble (R-UT), and 1-800-CONTACTS.

"Currently what we're trying to do is look at what is in the bill and make every attempt to change what is not palatable to optometry and our patients," Dr. Dygert said.

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AOA Affiliate Legal and Legislative Defense Fund launches next month

Last June, the AOA House of Delegates authorized the establishment of a legal and legislative defense fund, as well as an oversight board to oversee the program.

Beginning March 1, the AOA Affiliate Legal and Legislative Defense Fund interest-free loan program will be available to affiliate associations meeting program guidelines for support of the following purposes:

- Legal expenses that are more than the affiliate's normal yearly budget for costs related to lawsuits having national implications involving the protection of the profession or the practice of optometry; or
- For state legislation having national implications involving the protection of the profession or the practice of optometry that involve a) new counteractive public relations campaigns, or b) extraordinary lobbyist expenses that are more than the affiliate's normal yearly budget for public relations or lobbyist expenses.

The House of Delegates resolution requires the loan program to be initiated with the money remaining in the AOA Antitrust Legal Defense Fund and maintained with a yearly operating budget of $300,000.

The Oversight Board cannot loan more than $300,000 within any one year, and loans must be repaid to AOA within three years.

The Oversight Board has complete discretion in the amount and approval of a loan to an affiliate association.

Loan applications must be submitted at least 60 days before its twice yearly regularly scheduled meetings, except in emergency cases.

The first scheduled meeting of the Oversight Board is June 1.

The chair of the State Government Relations Center, Steven A. Loomis, O.D., will also chair the Oversight Board for the 2005-2006 program year.

Other board members include: Michele R. Haranin, O.D., Federal Relations Committee chair; David Crist, O.D., Advocacy Group chair; Mark J. Hennen, O.D., Eye Care Benefits Center chair; Jerald F. Combs, O.D.; and Randolph D. Lee, O.D. (alternate member).

For information, contact Sherry L. Cooper at (800) 365-2219, ext. 266 or *SLCooper@aoa.org*.

New Jersey enacts first-of-kind children's sports safety eyewear law

Children who wear eyeglasses while participating in sanctioned athletic events will be required to don protective eyewear, under a first-of-its-kind New Jersey law.

Under legislation (State Assembly Bill A-2091/State Senate Bill 1970) enacted last month, any Garden State child who wears corrective eyeglasses while participating in racquetball, squash, tennis, women's lacrosse, basketball, women's field hockey, badminton, paddleball, soccer, volleyball, baseball, or softball games, sponsored by a school, community or government agency, will be required to wear protective eyewear meeting the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F803 standards for safety frames and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z87.1 standards for safety lenses.

"It makes New Jersey the first state in the United States that will be protecting the eyes of children while playing sports," said New Jersey practitioner and past AOA Sport Vision Section chair Paul Berman, O.D., who campaigned for the legislation. Dr. Berman is director of Professional Relations and Education for Liberty Sport.

Dr. Berman and the Coalition to Prevent Sports Eye Injuries, formed to promote the legislation, hope the novel New Jersey law will spur similar action in other state legislatures across the nation.

"Every 13 minutes someone in the United States goes to the emergency room for a sports-related eye injury. The purpose of this bill is to minimize the needless loss of vision. It is estimated that over 90 percent of all eye injuries are preventable," Dr. Berman said.

The New Jersey protective sports eyewear law is consistent with the objectives of Healthy People 2010, the official national public health agenda established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Dr. Berman notes.

Healthy People 2010 Objective 28.9 specifically calls for efforts to "increase the use of appropriate personal protective eyewear in recreational activities and hazardous situations around the home."

The New Jersey legislation also establishes a grant program to help low-income families provide necessary protective eyewear for their children.

Grants will be available through the New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports to families who qualify for low-income housing under the Fair Housing Act.

The legislation also exempts schools as well as community or government agencies engaged in organizing, teaching, refereeing or coaching a sports activity, from civil liability for failure to administer or enforce the provisions of this act.

The legislation was sponsored by State Assemblyman Peter J. Barnes Jr. and State Senator Paul Sarlo and was signed into law by Acting New Jersey Governor Richard Codey.

There was no organized opposition to the bill.

In addition to the New Jersey Society of Optometric Physicians, the coalition backing the measure included:

- New Jersey Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance;
- New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports;
- New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology;
- Lions of Multiple District 16, New Jersey;
- New Jersey Recreation and Park Association;
- New Jersey Opticians Association; and
- Prevent Blindness America – New Jersey

Eye on Washington

Payments,

from page 1

mitted so individual patient accounts can be reconciled," the AOA Advocacy Group noted.

CMS has instructed carriers to forward adjusted claims to Medigap and secondary insurers if their agreements accept adjustments.

Thus, most Medigap plans and some secondary insurers will also make automatic adjustments, the AOA Advocacy Group noted. Resubmission of the claim will be necessary for some secondary insurers in order to receive the balance of payment due.

CMS notes that the updated, reprocessed claims would technically require additional co-payments and deductible payments from beneficiaries. Some health care providers have expressed concern that the waiver of the additional cost sharing by a physician, although small in monetary amount, could be viewed as violating the Medicare Anti-Kickback Law.

However, after discussing this issue with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Inspector General, CMS believes that the waiver of this additional amount would not violate the kickback law.

AOA will inform members immediately if the Inspector General's office issues any guidance.

"If an optometrist chooses to collect the remaining balance — he or she can either do so immediately or hold it as a patient balance to be paid upon future visits," the AOA Advocacy Group noted.

Because of the pending return to Medicare's 2005 fee schedule, CMS intends to offer an additional enrollment period for physicians to reconsider their Medicare participation decision in light of the anticipated better-pay situation.

The original enrollment period ran from Nov. 15 to Dec. 31, 2005. The extended enrollment period will run an additional 45 days, and was to start soon after the legislation was enacted.

Further action needed

While encouraged that Congress has taken action to spare health care practitioners a cut in their Medicare reimbursements this year, the new legislation ultimately represents a "short term solution," the AOA Advocacy Group noted in its Washington e-newsletter.

AOA and other health provider organizations are urging Congress to adjust the Medicare fee-setting formula, as presently established in federal, law, to prevent Medicare physician pay cuts in the future.

This year's 4.4 percent fee decrease was the latest in a series of Medicare pay cuts announced over recent years as the result of a factor in the complex Medicare fee-setting formula known as the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR).

The SGR ties future Medicare reimbursements to the recent performance of the U.S. economy.

The SGR is blamed for a 5.4 percent cut in Medicare Part B reimbursements in 2002. In 2003, health care practitioners saw that cut partially restored with a 1.6 percent increase in Medicare reimbursements. However, that increase came only after the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed a 4.4 percent cut in physician reimbursements and Congress intervened.

Part B providers were narrowly spared a 3.7 percent pay cut in 2004 and a 4.5 percent cut in 2005, receiving instead a moderate 1.5 percent increase each year—thanks to provisions included by lawmakers in the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) of 2003.

AOA and other health provider organizations hope to replace the SGR with another indicator in the Medicare fee-setting formula, or to modify the SGR.

Left unchanged, the Medicare fee-setting formula will cut reimbursements 26 percent over the next seven years.

However, a complete overhaul of the Medicare funding formula is considered unlikely this year.

Congress faces severe budgetary constraints and a short election-year legislative session in 2006.

The Medicare physician community will probably be forced to press for another stop-gap fix later this year, the AOA Advocacy Group notes.

"More hard work is ahead of us on this important payment and access issue," an AOA Advocacy Group bulletin noted. "This issue remains a top priority for the AOA."

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working 2/15/06 4:54 PM Page 1

APHA Vision Care Section seeks nominees

The American Public Health Association (APHA) is seeking nominations for their Distinguished Service Award, the Outstanding Scientific Paper/Project Award, and the Outstanding Student Paper/Project Award.

The Distinguished Service Award, which is sponsored in part by a grant from Vistakon, recognizes an individual, institution or group who has made an outstanding contribution or demonstrated continual high quality service in the area of public health eye/vision care.

The VCS-Beta Sigma Kappa Student Award, which is sponsored in part by Beta Sigma Kappa, recognizes a student or group of students that has contributed significantly to the advancement of eye/vision care in the public health field.

The Outstanding Scientific Paper/Project Award, recognizes an individual, group, or institution that has contributed significantly to the advancement of eye/vision care in the public health field.

The recipients of the awards will be honored during the next annual meeting of the American Public Health Association to be held in Boston, Nov. 4–8, 2006.

Nominations are requested by March 31, 2006, and should include a narrative statement of 250 words or less with each nomination along with a copy of paper/project to be considered.

All nominations should be sent to Dr. Satya B. Verma, Chair, VCS Awards Committee, Pennsylvania College of Optometry, 8360 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027. For further information, e-mail Dr. Verma at *satya@pco.edu*.

AOAPS seeks officers

The AOA Paraoptometric Section (AOAPS) members will vote for five new positions on the 2006-2007 council during the Annual Business Meeting and Election Breakfast on Friday, June 23 at Optometry's Meeting™.

The available positions include chair-elect, vice chair, secretary and two trustees.

Interviews for candidates in good standing who submit a letter of intent are conducted by a panel of at-large members pre-selected by the council chair.

Candidates must attend Optometry's Meeting™ in order to be considered.

For information call (800) 365-2219, ext. 222.

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Reponses urged to ongoing Medicare provider survey

Many health care providers selected to participate in federal government's Medicare Contractor Provider Satisfaction Survey may still have a little time to provide Medicare administrators with their assessment of their Medicare carrier's performance.

However, practitioners who receive survey forms should return them as quickly as possible, according to The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

"Many Medicare providers are taking the opportunity to voice their opinions on the administration of the Medicare program. The views of every provider asked to participate are important to the success of this study, as each one represents many other organizations that are similar in size, practice type and geographical location. The feedback from providers will be used to improve the program's efficiency," according to a CMS statement.

To be assured consideration, comments and recommendations must be received no later than 5 p.m. on April 4, 2006.

The CMS report on contractor performance is due in July.

Further information about the survey is available at: (www.cms.hhs.gov/MCPSS/).

Sports Vision Section seeking nominees for awards

The AOA Sports Vision Section (SVS) is seeking nominations from section members for the Annual SVS Awards, to be presented at the 2006 Optometry's Meeting™ in Las Vegas, June 21-25.

The awards, and their criteria, are listed below:

Sports Vision OD of the Year: This award recognizes an individual who has provided leadership and/or has made innovative, significant, or outstanding contributions to the field of sports vision and/or to the SVS.

Eagle Award: The Eagle Award is presented to a non-optometrist who significantly promotes sports vision and vision training to the public. Included among past recipients are Mark McGwire, Val Skinner, Picabo Street, and football coach Vince Dooley.

Industry Appreciation Award: This award is presented to an industry member who has demonstrated significant support of the SVS and its efforts to promote the profession of optometry and sports vision, as well as to educate consumers on the importance of protecting and caring for their eyesight and the enhancement of their vision skills.

Nominations may be made by any member of the SVS.Submit nominations no later than April 10, 2006. When mailing, send to the SVS Awards Committee, AOA Sports Vision Section, 243 North Lindbergh Blvd., Floor 1, St. Louis, MO 63141-7881, by e-mail to *SVS@aoa.org*, or by fax to (314) 991-4101.

For more information, contact the SVS office at (800) 365-2219, ext. 107.

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Thursday CE includes 'must-see' programs

Registrants of Optometry's Meeting™ will discover a wealth of "must see" CE on Thursday, June 22.

The overall education program is being supported by VisionWeb.

Before setting off for the Opening General Session featuring Dilbert-creator Scott Adams, sponsored by Essilor, on Thursday, attendees can head to the breakfast seminar, **"Advanced Techniques for Using Optomap Technology,"** sponsored by Optos.

Doctors of optometry who have incorporated Optomap technology into their practices will especially appreciate this lecture/workshop designed to describe and demonstrate techniques to best utilize the technology.

Course #B101 will be offered on Thursday from 6 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. (Lecturer: W. Jones, O.D.)

"Thursday's CE program is very exciting," said Kirk Smick, O.D., Continuing Education Committee chair. "Two very special programs will be presented and they are the first of their kind. In the morning, Alcon will present a program tracking the ophthalmic needs of a patient throughout her life. Unique problems present when one is in infancy, then childhood, then reading glasses, and finally cataracts and possibly ARMD."

Alcon will sponsor **"Our Patient for Life: Considering the Dynamics of Providing Seven Decades of Eye Care to a Single Patient,"** Course #1010, Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon.

The course will introduce attendees to a patient as a 6-month-old baby and follow her through seven decades of her life.

All six presenters will bring their special insights and recommendations into one patient's lifetime of eye care. (Lecturers: C. Brownlow, O.D., P. Freeman, O.D., R. Johnson, CPOT, S. Marossy, O.D., G. Steele, O.D., and R. Wooldridge, O.D.)

"In the afternoon, the American Optometric Association's Continuing Education Committee presents a program we have been working on for two years," said Dr. Smick.

"This Anterior Segment: Rapid Fire Update titled **'What Did She Say?'** will feature almost a dozen of optometry's brightest females in what should be an entertaining and educational event. No one has attempted a program of this magnitude featuring both political and educational-oriented female doctors. Get there early, as the seats will go fast."

Allergan will sponsor the course, #1013, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Ten key opinion leaders will present recent "need-to know" data and treatment strategies in anterior segment disease and contact lenses.

Highlights will include topical and oral therapeutics, keratitis, dry eye, the newest contact lenses and solutions and wavefront technology.

The succinct and fast-paced program will feature an all-women panel. (Lecturers: K. Mastrota, O.D., S. Bass, O.D., A. Laurenzi, O.D., S. Marossy, O.D., L. Sclafani, O.D., G. Secor, O.D., L. Sorrenson, O.D., M. Stiegemeier, O.D., L. Szczotka-Flynn, O.D., J. Uhl, O.D.)

"Survivor—the Silicone Hydrogel Challenge," sponsored by CooperVision, will deal with a new generation of materials that will take silicone hydrogel contact lenses to the next level, moving away from the fixed Dk/water content relationship and providing excellent surface characteristics and wettability without surface treatment.

Course #1113 will be Thursday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. (Lecturer: J. Schaeffer, O.D.)

VSP will sponsor **"Pediatric Pharmacology and Pathology,"** Course #1213, Thursday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The course will review commonly available ocular medications and side effects in children. (Lecturer: V. Kattouf, O.D.)

"Making Cataract Surgery Refractive Surgery," Course #1612, Thursday from noon to 1 p.m. is also sponsored by VSP.

The course will discuss the implants, incisions and pre- and post-operative care that allow cataract surgery to achieve a norm of 20/20 visual acuity with minimal refractive error. (Lecturer: E. Schmidt, O.D.)

VSP will also sponsor **"Ocular Melanoma: Leave It In or Take It Out?"**

Course #1615 will be Thursday from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

This course will provide insight into the clinical work-up, diagnosis, and management of ocular melanomas, including a discussion of the controversy surrounding enucleation. (Lecturer: M. Dunbar, O.D.)

"Clinical Grand Rounds in Allergic Eye Disease," will be sponsored by Inspire Pharmaceuticals.

Course #1712 will be Thursday from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m., and will feature a participation approach to grand rounds with clinical presentations of allergic eye disease.

The course will cover seasonal allergic conjunctivitis, atopic keratoconjunctivitis, and giant papillary conjunctivitis. (Lecturer: P. Karpecki, O.D.)

Before heading off to the International Wine and Cheese Reception in the Exhibit Hall, courtesy of Hoya, attendees can stop by the Education Theater.

Alcon will sponsor **"Dry Eye… New Approaches to Treating an 'Age-Old' Problem"** in the theater Thursday from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Course #T121 will present new treatment options for dry eye, which has plagued patients for years despite varied treatment scenarios. (Lecturer: J. Schachet, O.D.)

For information, visit *www.optometrys-meeting.org*.

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Future, *from page 1*

process that has been put in place with much planning and thought, following two basic principles: inclusiveness and being research-driven," said AOA President Richard L. Wallingford, O.D. "It is intended to yield an action plan and consensus that the entire profession can build toward."

The session was the second of three planned Optometry 2020 Summit meetings in a series. The Optometry 2020 Summit is funded by grants from all 17 members of the AOA Ophthalmic Council.

The first Summit, last August, identified the questions that Summit attendees felt would have to be answered over the Summit process.

"The first Summit was all about questions," said AOA President-elect and Summit Co-Chair C. Thomas Crooks III, O.D. "At that Summit, we looked at the possibilities for the future, all the possibilities: the good, the bad, and the ugly. Today we ask, What are the answers? We will create a picture, a portrait and destination of where we want to be."

The final Summit will be held August 10-13, also in Dallas, to come up with an action plan for the profession in the following eight areas:

- Eye Care Patient/Consumer
- Science and Technology
- Economics
- Eye Care Delivery
- Human Resources
- Knowledge, Education and Training
- Licensure, Regulation, and Continued and Advanced Competency
- Industry and Profession Synergies

As in the first Summit, groups divided into the eight areas of focus. Over one and a half days they each refined their desires for the future of optometry into six brief statements that should become fact by 2020.

An example of a proposed statement is "All patients receive culturally competent care by their optometrist and staff," which was proposed by the Eye Care Patient/Consumer group.

Another example is "Optometry drives evidence-based practice research and education, which improves eye and vision care outcomes. Evidence-based care is the standard of practice," which was proposed by the Science and Technology group.

With eight groups developing six statements of desired states each, all groups reconvened to consider the 48 statements, and enter their thoughts on a survey. Each group had a panel read the statements and answer questions from the people who attended other groups.

According to AOA Vice President and Summit Co-Chair Kevin L. Alexander, O.D., Ph.D., "this group is delivering to the profession its preferred vision of the future."

He described how, over the next six months, the statements will be reviewed, along with the comments from the attendees at Summit Two, in order to ensure they reflect the profession's consensus.

Having done that, the statements will be "delivered out to the profession" for further review.

According to Dr. Alexander, the leaders of organizations related to optometry will identify the statements that pertain to them, or upon which they have influence, and begin to formulate action plans to attain the desired states.

In August, those leaders will convene in Dallas to explore the resources they will need, the partnerships that will need to be forged and the actions that will need to be taken to reach the desired states.

"The final product will be a compilation of those reports and a report to the profession of what each organization plans to do to attain those preferred states," he said.

The second Summit, he noted, is a critical step in that process:

"At Summit Three, we may not all agree on strategies to get there, but we all need to agree where we are headed."

Wallace Lovejoy, J.D., discusses aspects of Human Resources in a group session.

The Eye Care Delivery group included, from left Donald Higgins, O.D.; Lori Youngman, O.D.; Aaron Werner; Lynn Lawrence, CPOT; and John Lahr, O.D.

AOA Vice President and Summit Co-Chair Kevin L. Alexander, O.D., Ph.D.

Charles Wormington, O.D., and Mira Swiecicki, O.D., record ideas generated during the Science and Technology group discussions.

Reporting for the Licensure and Regulation group were: from left Wes DeRosier, O.D.; Claire Holley; Rick Weisbarth, O.D.; Joyce Yu; Doris Wong, O.D.; and John Rumpakis, O.D.

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Industry Profile is a regular feature in AOA News *allowing participants of the Ophthalmic Council to express themselves on issues and products they consider important to the members of AOA.*

Industry Profile: Allergan

Since Allergan's establishment in 1950, the company has been committed to eye care and the ongoing research and development of innovative products that help optometrists treat and satisfy the unmet medical needs of their patients.

"Allergan understands and respects the key role optometrists play in maintaining and enhancing the vision of their patients," said Joseph J. Schultz, senior vice president, U.S. Eye Care. "We believe in the American Optometric Association's mission of improving the quality and availability of eye and vision care everywhere and are proud to partner with optometrists by supporting their efforts to care for patients and build their practices."

Allergan's commitment to the profession of optometry has been demonstrated at all levels—from the continued development of innovative products to educational initiatives and industry sponsorships to philanthropic endeavors.

Innovative Eye Care Products

To treat numerous ocular conditions including allergies, infections, chronic dry eye and glaucoma, Allergan provides a robust portfolio of industry-leading products that includes Zymar®, an anti-infective for the treatment of bacterial conjunctivitis, and Lumigan®, a prostaglandin analog developed to reduce intraocular pressure in patients suffering from glaucoma or ocular hypertension who have not responded adequately to other medications.

Allergan also holds the leadership position in the treatment of chronic dry eye, as the only company providing both over-the-counter and prescription therapy options to patients suffering from the condition, affecting more than 3.2 million Americans age 50 and older.[1-2] The Allergan dry eye continuum of care includes the complete line of Refresh® brand artificial tears, which is the No. 1 doctor-recommended brand of artificial tears[3], and Restasis®, the first and only prescription eye drop approved to increase tear production in patients whose tear production is presumed to be suppressed due to ocular inflammation, the underlying cause associated with chronic dry eye. For patients with chronic dry eye, these products offer a complete treatment strategy.

Dedicated to Education

Allergan demonstrates its support of optometric education with continuing education activities throughout the year. Through unrestricted educational grants, the company sponsors events at key medical meetings including the annual American Academy of Optometry and AOA meetings, as well as Vision Expos East and West and regional and local section meetings. Allergan also sponsors a series of continuing education teleconferences throughout the year on a diverse range of topics, including practice building, coding, building subspecialties and increasing practice profitability.

"I've spent a lot of time out in the field meeting with optometrists to learn about their challenges and how we can continue to support them," said Paul Huff, Restasis® Product Manager and Optometric Strategies. "We are working on a number of initiatives for 2006 based on feedback focusing primarily on continuing education."

1 Schaumberg D, Sullivan D, Buring J, Dana R. Prevalence of dry eye syndrome among U.S. women. Am J Ophthalmol. 2003;136:318-326.

2 Moss et al. Arch Ophthalmol. 2000;118:1264

3 Verispan's Physician Drug & Diagnosis Audit (PDDA), February 2000 – January 2005.

The prestigious Persol eyewear icon, born in Turin, Italy, during the 1920s, is recognized for its cutting-edge technology and design solutions. Sports figures worldwide have chosen Persol, a brand of the Luxottica Group, for these qualities, which also ensure greater eye protection and optical perfection. Shown is style PO 2807S, which is part of the new 2006 sun collection. The acetate retro design features the exclusive Meflecto GTO system, which allows the frame to mold itself to the shape of the wearer's face. For more information, visit *www.persol.com*.

Acuvue Oasys CL offers extended parameters

Acuvue® Oasys™ contact lenses, which recently received Food and Drug Administration approval for extended wear, are now available in expanded parameters.

Vistakon, a division of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, announced the availability of 15 new parameters, which now include +0.50 to +4.00 in 0.25D steps.

Acuvue Oasys™ is the first daily-wear contact lens made from senofilcon A, which is a new silicone hydrogel material that is 50 percent smoother than other currently available silicone hydrogel lenses, according to Vistakon.

Acuvue Oasys™ meets the highest UV-blocking standards for contact lenses, blocking greater than 96 percent of UVA rays and 99 percent of UVB rays.

The new lens also features an improved formulation of Hydraclear™ technology that combines high performance base materials with a moisture-rich wetting agent.

"Acuvue Oasys™ is my first choice for upgrading my patients—but particularly for the longer-term contact lens wearers, many of whom are early presbyopes," said Thomas Bobst, O.D.

"The combination of monovision and the outstanding comfort of Acuvue Oasys™ helps me keep these patients in lenses."

For more information about Acuvue Oasys™, visit *www.ecp.acuvue.com*

Industry News

Essilor launches new Web sites

Essilor of America, Inc., launched three new Web sites for its Varilux®, Airwear® and Thin&Lite® products.

The Web sites are designed to provide more comprehensive product and industry information to optometrists as well as consumers.

❖*Varilux.com* is the new portal for the industry's leading family of progressive lenses. New features include current product availability information, product information searchable by design or material, articles and research, related links, and an Essilor sales consultant locator.

❖*Airwear.com* is the new Web site for the company's polycarbonate lenses. The site features informative videos and flash demonstrations, as well as current product availability information, product information searchable by design or material, articles and research, related links, and an Essilor sales consultant locator.

❖*Thinandlite.com* is the new Web site for the Thin&Lite lens, which is nearly 50 percent thinner and flatter for sharper vision, better optics, and an enhanced appearance, according to Essilor. The Web site features information and benefits for all three indexes—1.60, 1.67, and 1.74 technology, including availability charts and consumer guidelines.

"Essilor has enhanced our presence online by making information more accessible and content much richer for eye care professionals and consumers," said Carl Bracy, vice president of marketing. Essilor said it will continue to update more of its Web sites through 2006.

Variluxpro.com and *Airwearpro.com* will no longer be active Web sites, as optometrists can now find needed information on the new sites.

Allergan reformulates Alphagan solution

Allergan announced the availability of a new formulation of Alphagan® ophthalmic solution for treatment of open-angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension.

Alphagan P 0.1% is indicated for lowering intraocular pressure (IOP) in patients with such problems.

The new formulation was designed to give patients maximal therapeutic efficacy while reducing drug exposure.

The concentration of brimonidine was reduced by 50 percent from the original product, which led to 41 percent lower incidence of ocular allergy, according to Allergan.

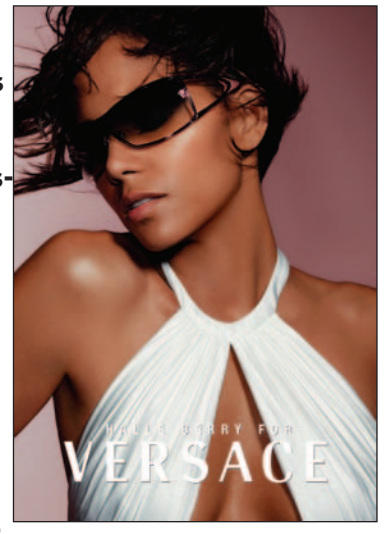
Results from a 12-month clinical trial indicate that IOP reductions using the new Alphagan P 0.1% were clinically equivalent to the original Alphagan 0.2%.

At all follow-up times in a 12-month period, the difference in mean IOP reductions was less than 1 mm Hg.

Alphagan P 0.1% also contains Purite®, a unique preservative used in other Allergan products, such as Refresh Tears® eye drops.

Using Purite instead of benzalkonium chloride (BAK) allows Alphagan P 0.1% to be stabilized at a higher pH level. Increasing the pH of the formulation makes it possible for more brimonidine to penetrate into the aqueous humor and hit the target site for lowering IOP.

For full prescribing information, visit *www.allergan.com*.



Luxottica and The Versace Group announced actress Halle Berry as the star of their upcoming advertising and image campaign for Spring/Summer 2006. Berry is shown wearing Versace sunwear style VE 2048, which will be featured in leading national lifestyle and fashion publications. The image is also available in Versace POP materials, including countercards and window displays. For more information, call Luxottica at (800) 422-2020.

Vistakon creates new professional development position for Clompus

Vistakon named Richard Clompus, O.D., to the newly created role of director, Professional Development.

"I am very pleased that Richard is joining our Professional Affairs Team at Vistakon," said J. Patrick Cummings, O.D., vice president of Vistakon's Professional Group. "His vast experience and the strong relationships he's developed over the years are true assets that will help serve the practitioner."

Dr. Clompus was formerly the vice president of Professional Affairs for The Spectacle Lens Group of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.

In his new role, Dr. Clompus will be responsible for managing professional development programs for current practitioners.

Dr. Clompus has more than 26 years of experience in the eye care industry.

Before joining Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc., Dr. Clompus had his own optometric practice, specializing in family eye care, contact lenses and low vision rehabilitation services.

Dr. Clompus was also a clinical faculty member of The Eye Institute at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry.

Dr. Clompus was a charter member of the AOA Contact Lens Section.

Richard Clompus, O.D., joins Vistakon as director, Professional Development

Dr. Clompus was selected as one of the "Best and Brightest Optometrists" and is a past recipient of AOA's National Recognition Award for Continuing Education and Optometrist of the Year Award.

For more meetings information, visit www.AOANews.org. **To submit an item, send a note to EventCalendar@aoa.org**

March

UNIVERSITY OF MO- ST. LOUIS COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY & OPHTHALMIC EDUCATION INSTITUTE
Las Vegas 2006
March 1-3, 2006
Flamingo Hotel, Las Vegas, NV
314/ 516-5615
FAX 314-516-6708
ellerbusch@umsl.edu
optometry.umsl.edu

TROPICAL SEA E
Curacao 2006
March 1-7, 2006
Curacao Marriott Beach Resort, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles
Helen Jacobs
281/ 992-0002
helen@tropicalseae.com
www.tropicalseae.com

NORTH DAKOTA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION CONTINUING EDUCATION CONFERENCE
March 3-4 in Grand Forks, ND at the Ramada Inn
Nancy Kopp
701/ 258-6766
701/ 258-9005
nkopp@btinet.net
www.ndeyecare.info

MONTANA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
BIG SKY SKI CONFERENCE
March 2-5, 2006
Huntley Lodge Big Sky Ski Resort, Big Sky, MT
406/ 443-1160
406/ 443-4614
suew@mteyes.com
www.mteyes.com

18TH ANNUAL OCULAR SYMPOSIUM 2006
Sacramento Valley Optometric Society March 5, 2006
Marriott Rancho Cordova Hotel, Rancho Cordova, CA
(916) 447-0270
jerrysue@svos.info

NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY
4 STATE AREA STUDENT SYMPOSIUM
March 4, 2006
NSUCO Campus, Tahlequah
918/ 456-5511 x4033
918/ 458-2104
mccormil@nsuok.edu
arapaho.nsuok.edu/`optometry

DADE COUNTY OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
MIAMI NICE
March 4-5, 2006
Omni Colonnade Hotel Coral Gables, FL
800/ 808-5018
FAX: 772/ 334-9223
susie683@aol.com
www.miamieyes.org

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY
OCULAR DISEASE PART 1
March 4-5, 2006
Southern California College of Optometry
714/ 449-7442
satkinson@scco.edu
www.scco.edu

19TH ANNUAL EYE SKI CONFERENCE
March 4-11, 2006
Lodge at Mountain Village Park City Utah
419/ 475-6181
tandbkime@buckeye-express.com
www.eyeskiutah.com

GREAT LAKES CONGRESS
March 5-6, 2006
Renaissance Chicago North Shore Hotel Northbrook IL
jeffgetzell@sbcglobal.net

SEE-N-SKI 2006
March 5-8, 2006
Caesars Tahoe, Lake Tahoe,
702/ 220-7444
noalv03@yahoo.com
www.nevadaoptometric.org

20TH ANNUAL EYE SKI OPTOMETRIC CONFERENCE
March 5-10, 2006
Park City, UT
www.eyeskiutah.com

SACRAMENTO VALLEY OPTOMETRIC SOCIETY
18th Annual Ocular Symposium 2006
March 5, Marriott Rancho Cordova Hotel
916/447-0270
jerrysue@svos.info

NEW JERSEY SOCIETY OF OPTOMETRIC PHYSICIANS
2006 WINTER EDUCATION SERIES
MARCH 5, 2006
Princeton Hyatt
Sharon L. Kais
20 Texas Avenue
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
609/671-0900, ext. 117
FAX: 609/671-1820
sharonlkais@aol.com

OCULAR THERAPEUTICS
March 15-22, 2005
Wyndham Aruba Beach Resort and Casino 713/882-6708
713/882-6708
kathie@otce.net
http://www.otce.net

OPTOWEST 2006
March 9-12, 2006
Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, CA
800/877-5738;
916/441-3990
FAX: 916/448-1423
jessicas@coavision.org
www.optowest.com

MAINE OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
SUGARLOAF SKI MEETING
March 10-11, 2006
Sugarloaf USA Carrabassett Valley ME
207/ 626-9920
207/ 626-9935
MOA.Office@MaineEyeDoctors.com
www.MaineEyeDoctors.com

SOUTHWEST COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRY
Educational Conference and Exposition
March 10-12, 2006
Hotel Intercontinental - Dallas,
Niki Bedell
713/ 743-1856
713/ 743-6541
swco@optometry.uh.edu
www.swco.org

OEP CLINICAL CURRICULUM
TBI/ABI
March 18-20, 2006
Baltimore, MD
Theresa Krejci
800/447 0370
www.babousa.org.

NOVA SCOTIA ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS 2006 ACE SYMPOSIUM, March 24 – 26, 2006, World Trade & Convention Centre (WTCC)
Halifax, NS
(902) 499-0909
wendy@innovativeplanning.ca

NEW JERSEY ACADEMY OF OPTOMETRY
2006 GOLF CONFERENCE
March 22-25, 2006
Hilton Embassy Suites at Kingston Plantation,
Myrtle Beach, SC
Dennis H. Lyons, O.D.
732/920-0110
Dhl2020@aol.com

15TH ANNUAL NEURO-OPTOMETRIC REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION (NORA) CONFERENCE
March 22-26, 2006
Tuscon, AZ
866-22-3887
rwill23@hotmail.com

NATIONAL CORNEA AND ANTERIOR SEGMENT SYMPOSIUM EAST, Arlington, VA, March 25-26, 2006. 877-825-2020, info@neconferences.com, or www.neconferences.com.

ASPEN-SNOWMASS VISION RETREAT 20TH ANNUAL SPRING BREAK MEETING
March 26 - 28, Timberline Lodge,Upper Snowmass Village, CO 314-351-3499
eyeski@integrity.com
www.eyeski.com

INTERNATIONAL VISION EXPO EAST
March 30-April 2, 2006
New York, NY
Hotel & travel 800/ 388-8106 or 312/ 527-7300
www.visionexpoeast.com

PENNSYLVANIA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
Curriculum for Professional Development II
March 26, 2006
Wyndham Hotel, Harrisburg,
Ilene K. Sauertieg
717/233-6455
Ilene@poaeyes.org

April

NEBRASKA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
NOA Spring Convention
April 1-2, 2006
Omaha Embassy Suites
Omaha, NE
402/474-7716

NEW HAMPSHIRE OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
SPRING MEETING
April 2, 2006
Grappone Conference Center, Concord, New Hampshire
Brian Klinger, O.D.
466 Washington Road
Rye, NH 03870
603/964-2885
FAX: 603/964-2886
optometrist@comcast.neT

BINOCULAR VISION AND PEDIATRICS FORUM 2006, April 6,
CHILDREN'S LEARNING FORUM 2007, April 7
Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus, OH, Contact: Dr. Marjean Taylor Kulp, The OSU College of Optometry, 614-688-3336
Fax: 614-247-6907
kulp.6@osu.edu,
http://optometry.osu.edu

AOA SPRING PLANNING CONFERENCE
April 19-23, 2006
St. Louis, MO
www.aoa.org

ARKANSAS OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
April 20-23, Hot Springs
Jennifer Martinez, 501-661-7675 501-372-0233 fax
aropt@swbell.net
www.arkansasoptometric.org

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY MORGAN SYMPOSIUM/SARVER SERIES
April 21-23, 2006
Doubletree Hotel, Berkeley
800/827-2163
www.optometry.berkeley.edu

see Meetings, next page

Meetings

Meetings, *from page 22*

5TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF BEHAVIORAL OPTOMETRY, April 21-24, 2006 Sydney, Australia. Visit www.icbo2006.com for full details and registration information."

SOUTHERN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY
SPRING CONTINUING EDUCATION WEEKEND
APRIL 22-23, 2006
SCO CAMPUS, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE
800/238-0180, EXT. 4
CE@SCO.EDU
WWW.SCO.EDU

SJOGREN'S SYNDROME FOUNDATION
IXth International Symposium on Sjögren's syndrome
April 27-29, 2006
Bethesda, MD
301-718-0300
www.ISSSonline.org

WEST FLORIDA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
Spring Break Seminar
April 28-30, 2006
Sandestin Beach Hilton Resort
Dr. Wanda Batson
860/683-0221

EASTERN STATES OPTOMETRIC CONGRESS
April 30-May 1, 2006
Mohonk Mountain House, New Paltz, NY
Stuart Rothman, O.D.
973/992-0998
FAX: 973/992-8961
smrod@aol.com

May

AOA CONGRESSIONAL CONFERENCE
May 1-3, 2006
Washington, DC
www.aoa.org

ARIZONA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
Annual Congress
May 4-7, 2006
Hilton El Conquistador Resort
Tucson, AZ
602/279-0055
FAX: 602/264-6356
info@azoa

NEW ENGLAND PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES, INC.
SPRING OPTOMETRIC SEMINAR, May 7, 2006
Tarrytown, NY, Janet Swartz
877/825-2020
FAX: 987/470-4520
info@neconferences.com
www.neconferences.com

FLORIDA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
NSU/FOA Cruise
Enchantment of the Seas
May 13-18, 2006
Grand Cayman and Ocho Rios, Jamaica
800/805-7245
www.funseas.com/nsu

MIDWEST VISION CONGRESS & EXPO 2006
May 11-14, 2006
Donald Stephens Convention Center Rosemont, IL
www.midwestvisioncongress.com

PINELLAS OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
SUNCOAST SEMINAR
May 13-14, 2006
Philip G. Currey, O.D.
727/442-5504
Idoc1@aol.com

MONTANA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION 2006
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION
May 17-20, 2006
Holiday Inn Grand Montana, Billings, MT
Sue A. Weingartner,
406-443-1160
suew@mteyes.com

10TH ANNUAL CLINICAL EYE CARE CONFERENCE & ALUMNI WEEKEND, Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry, May 19-21, 2006
Fort Lauderdale,Shakara Rosenbaum, MS 954/262-4224, ocoe@nsu.nova.edu
http://optometry.nova.edu/ce

OPTOMETRIC EXTENSION PROGRAM FOUNDATION
European Kraskin Invitational Skeffington Symposium
May 20-22, 2006
Denmark

June

UTAH OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL CONVENTION
June 1-4, 2006
The Canyons Resort
Park City, Utah
Clive E. Watson
801-364-9103
uoa@xmission.com
www.utaheyedoc.org

OPTOMETRY ASSOCIATION OF LOUISIANA
ANNUAL CONVENTION
June 9-11, 2006
The Lafayette Hilton & Towers,
Dr. James D. Sandefur or Amanda Perry
888/388-0675
318/335-0675
optla@bellsouth.net
www.optla.org

PENNSYLVANIA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
POA SPRING EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE
June 10-11, 2006
Hershey Lodge and Convention Center
Ilene K. Sauertieg
717/233-6455
Ilene@poaeyes.org

THE 109TH ANNUAL AOA CONGRESS & 36TH ANNUAL AOSA CONFERENCE: OPTOMETRY'S MEETING™
June 21-25, 2006
Las Vegas, Nevada Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino.
www.optometrysmeeting.org

July

FLORIDA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
2006 FOA ANNUAL CONVENTION
July 13-16, 2006
Marco Island Marriott, Marco Island, Florida
Kellie Webb
800/399-2334
kellie@floridaeyes.org

NATIONAL GLAUCOMA SYMPOSIUM WEST, Newport Beach, CA. July 15-16, 2006. 877-825-2020, info@neconferences.com, or www.neconferences.com.

NORTHERN ROCKIES OPTOMETRIC CONFERENCE, July 20-22, 2006 Snow King Conference Center, Jackson, WY, www.NROCMeeting.com
307/637-7575
Contact: Dan Lex

ALABAMA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
GULF COAST SUMMER CONFERENCE
July 28-29, 2006
Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa
334/ 834-1057
lori@alaopt.com
www.alaopt.org

August

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION, EDUCATIONAL RETREAT 2006
August 5-6, Southseas Island Resort, Sanibel, Florida
Dr. Brad Middaugh
239/481-7799
FAX: 239/481-3739
swfoa@att.net
www.genesisgt.com/swfoa

SUMMIT 3 – OPTOMETRY 2020
August 10-13, 2006
Hyatt Regency DFW
Dallas, TX
www.aoa.org

THE 109TH ANNUAL AOA CONGRESS & 36TH ANNUAL AOSA CONFERENCE: OPTOMETRY'S MEETING™
June 21-25, 2006
Las Vegas, Nevada Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino.
www.optometrysmeeting.org

Ad Showcase

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Bellagio Hotel Las Vegas

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email tracyabel@earthlink.net
http://www.mwco.org/

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NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

is seeking applicants for a faculty position with an emphasis in primary care and vision therapy. This position will include classroom and clinical teaching duties and may include some administrative duties.

Applicants' qualifications must include the O.D. degree and eligibility for licensure to practice the full scope of Optometry in **Oklahoma**. Preference will be given to applicants with advanced academic degrees, residency training, or teaching experience. Position opens July 1, 2006.

A current curriculum vitae, official transcripts of all college work completed, and three letters of reference should be submitted to:

BARBARA ABERCROMBIE
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
600 NORTH GRAND AVENUE
TAHLEQUAH, OK 74464-2399

Questions concerning the position may be directed to:
Douglas K. Penisten, O.D., Ph.D.
Associate Dean
(918)456-5511, Ext. 4025
Ref: Position # EOOO2027

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10th Annual Clinical Eye Care Conference
and 4th Annual Alumni Reunion

For more information: Shakara Rosenbaum, M.S.Ed.
Coordinator, Office of Continuing Education & Alumni Affairs
(954) 262.4224 or email at ocoe@nsu.nova.edu

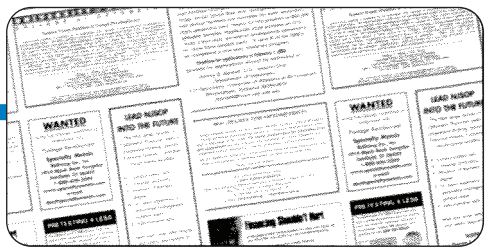
presented by: Office of Continuing Education & Alumni Affairs
NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY
3200 South University Drive • Fort Lauderdale-Davie, Florida 33328

http://optometry.nova.edu/ce

Focus on Women's Eye Health
MAY 19 - 21, 2006

Sponsored by Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry through educational grants provided by Alcon®, Ciba Vision®, MedOp Inc., The Vision Care Institute™ of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc., Vistakon®, Division of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.

NSU NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY



THE NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

Clinical Faculty Position: Developmental Vision, Vision Therapy, and / or Traumatic Brain Injury

The New England College of Optometry invites applications for a full-time tenure-track faculty position in the Department of Specialty and Advanced Care. Applicants should have an O.D. degree and advanced training with an expertise within the broad area(s) of developmental vision, vision therapy, and/or traumatic brain injury. A Ph.D. or M.S. in a related field is preferred.

Responsibilities will depend upon the unique qualifications and interests of the applicant, and will include clinical care, laboratory teaching, lecturing, and research. He/she will serve as a member of the professional staff of The New England Eye Institute and may provide care in a variety of settings including community health centers, schools, hospitals and other health facilities in the greater Boston area. The applicant must be eligible for licensure in Massachusetts. The applicant will also be expected to establish an extramurally funded research program. Faculty rank and salary will be commensurate with experience.

The College is a small but dynamic institution with a strong commitment to optometric teaching, patient care, and the development of a collaborative research environment. Applicants should submit a complete curriculum vitae, a statement of teaching and research interests, and the names of three professional references to:

Dr. Bruce Moore, Chair of the Faculty Search Committee
c/o The Office of Academic Affairs
The New England College of Optometry
424 Beacon Street.
Boston, MA 02115

Deadline for submission of application: March 1, 2006.

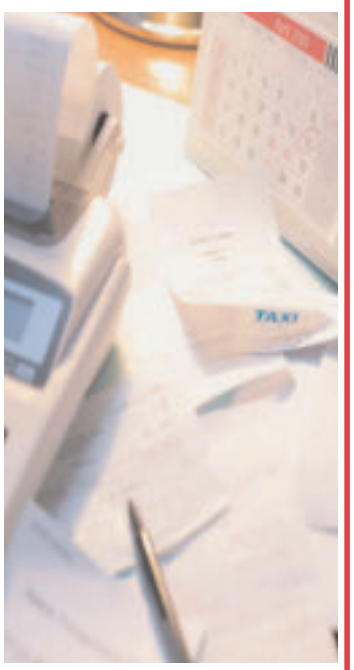
The College is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

DON'T PANIC

It's Not Too Late

With tax season "crunch time" coming, we remind you that the IRS now allows an automatic six month extension to file business and individual returns.

Our team at May & Company is committed to providing our OD clients with sound accounting and business planning services at all times. If you are rushed, do not have all of your tax information, or would just prefer to take advantage of all available tax planning opportunities, we encourage you to consider extending your tax returns.



Contact us for your FREE report.
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Speakers:
Dr. Michael DePaolis
Dr. John McGreal
Dr. Jerome Sherman
Dr. Leonid Skorin

For more information about our 18 hour doctor program, exhibits, and paraoptometric program, in beautiful Jackson Hole, Wyoming scheduled for July 21-23, 2005, please contact us at:

Northern Rockies Optometric Conference
716 Randall Ave., Cheyenne, WY 82001
Ph: 307/637-7575
Fax: 307/638-8472
www.NROCmeeting.com

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
MICHIGAN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

Tenure Track Faculty Position

The successful applicant will assume duties teaching in the classroom and laboratories in the area of vision science. Teaching and supervising optometry students and residents in the clinic and overseeing research projects may also be assigned. Other faculty responsibilities will include scholarly activity, service, and counseling of students. Faculty members also have professional responsibilities which may include advising students, orientation, registration of students, keeping regular posted office hours, participation in University and professional committees, and participation in traditional functions which have academic significance. Faculty members may be required to teach off-campus or online courses. Salary and rank are commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Required Qualifications

Applicants must have either: Earned the Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree, be eligible for appointment to the clinical staff of the college, and demonstrate evidence of advanced degree, education or experience in vision science; OR, have earned a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in vision science.

Preferred Qualifications

Applicants with advanced degrees in both clinical eye care and vision science (i.e., O.D., Ph.D. or O.D., M.S.). Demonstrated ability to work within a team teaching environment. Willingness to develop in the areas of patient care, teaching, scholarly/professional activities, and leadership. Prior teaching experience and an interest in teaching.
Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Interested individuals must submit a curriculum vitae, letter of interest, the names and phone numbers (include FAX number and e-mail address if available) of three current references, and any other supporting documentation to the Chair of the MCO Faculty Recruitment Committee as indicated below. Final candidate(s) will be required to furnish official college transcripts.

Send Application Materials to

Mark Swan, OD, MEd
Chair, Faculty Recruitment Committee
Michigan College of Optometry
1310 Cramer Circle, PEN 402
Big Rapids, MI 49307
231-591-2184 Phone
mswan@ferris.edu

For additional position information or more information about Ferris State University, please visit our website at www.ferris.edu/mco/positions.

Ferris State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Ad Showcase

Tenure Track Faculty Position

The Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University invites applications for a full-time tenure-track appointment. The successful applicant will assume duties in patient care and teaching in the clinic, classroom, and laboratories. Other faculty responsibilities will include scholarly activity, service, and counseling of students. Faculty members also have professional responsibilities which may include advising students, orientation, registration of students, keeping regular posted office hours, participation in University and professional committees, and participation in traditional functions which have academic significance. Faculty members may be required to teach off-campus or on-line courses. Salary and rank are commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Required Qualifications

Applicants must hold the Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree, and be eligible for appointment to the clinical staff of the college. Applicants must also have completed an accredited optometric residency, or have an equivalent degree or experience in the didactic and clinical training of optometry students.

Preferred Qualifications

Experience and interest in clinical and didactic instruction in primary care optometry. It is also important for the candidate to have experience working within a team teaching environment and demonstrate the ability to develop and fund scholarly/professional activities. The candidate will be expected to develop in the areas of patient care, teaching, scholarly/professional activities, and leadership.
Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Interested individuals must submit a curriculum vitae, letter of interest, the names and phone numbers (include FAX number and e-mail address if available) of three current references, and any other supporting documentation to the Chair of the MCO Faculty Recruitment Committee as indicated below. Final candidate(s) will be required to furnish official college transcripts.

Send Application Materials to

Mark Swan, OD, MEd
Chair, Faculty Recruitment Committee
Michigan College of Optometry
1310 Cramer Circle, PEN 402
Big Rapids, MI 49307
231-591-2184 Phone
mswan@ferris.edu

For additional position information or more information about Ferris State University, please visit our website at www.ferris.edu/mco/positions.

Ferris State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Southern California College of Optometry

Tenure Track Faculty Position

The Southern California College of Optometry invites applications for a full-time clinical tenure track position in the Vision Therapy/Pediatric Service available in the summer of 2006. Responsibilities include clinical and laboratory teaching assignments in this service and binocular vision/strabismus. The individuals will be expected to engage in clinical research and scholarship.

Qualifications for this position should include an optometry degree with state optometric licensure. Additional residency training and/or a graduate degree preferred. Rank and salary will be commensurate with training and qualifications.

Candidates for this position should submit a letter of application, a curriculum vitae, statement of professional interests, and names of three references to:

Morris S. Berman, O.D., M.S.
Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs
Southern California College of Optometry
2575 Yorba Linda Blvd., Fullerton, CA 92831-1699
Tel: (714) 449-7455 • Fax: (714) 992-7809 • email: mberman@scco.edu

Southern California College of Optometry is an Equal Opportunity Employer

New England Eye Institute Invites Applications for Professional Staff Appointments

The New England Eye Institute (NEEI), the clinical services corporation of the New England College of Optometry (NECO), invites applications for professional staff members to serve as attending optometrists and educators within NEEI's primary care service, homeless/charity care service and community health center programs. These staff members will also receive teaching appointments with NECO.

A professional staff member of NEEI is a highly qualified doctor of optometry and clinician-educator who works within a dynamic team-oriented, not-for-profit eye care network serving the visual health needs of populations in greater Boston.

Required qualifications include an OD degree, advanced professional credentials such as residency training or equivalent clinical experience, eligibility to be licensed in Massachusetts and an active commitment to excellence in patient care and teaching.

Salary will be commensurate with experience. Start dates for these appointments will vary, ranging from June 1 – September 1, 2006. Applicants should submit a letter of application and curriculum vitae by April 1, 2006 to:

Dr. Roger Wilson
Vice President for Professional Services and Strategy Assessment
1255 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02215
617.236.6229
wilsonr@neco.edu
www.ne-eyeinstitute.org

The College is an Equal Opportunity employer.

optc west 2006

March 9 -12, 2006
Long Beach Convention Center
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Long Beach, California

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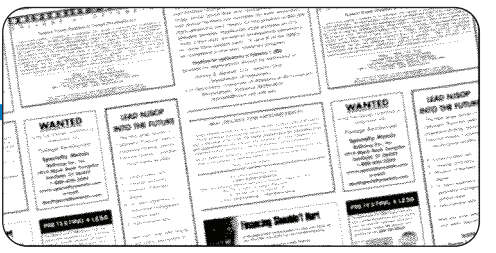

American Optometric Association

NEWS

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Classified advertising rates are $2.00 per words. This includes the placement of your advertisement in the classified section of the AOA Member Web site for two weeks. There is a $40 minimum charge per issue for the NEWS classifieds. A phone number or e-mail address counts as one word. Boldface listings in AOA NEWS are an extra $2.00 per word. An AOA box number charge is $20.00 and includes mailing of responses. The envelope will be forwarded, unopened, to the party who placed the advertisement. The charge for an automated e-mail response link is $10.00 To reply to an ad with such a link, simply click on the link, type your message and press send. Payment for all classified advertising must be made in advance of publication, regardless of the number of times it is to appear. Please remit by check, Mastercard, Visa or American Express. Be sure to include the expiration date and credit card number. Classifieds are not commissionable. All advertising copy must be received by e-mail at k.spurlock@elsevier.com or by fax at 212.633.3986 attention Keida Spurlock, Classified Advertising. You can also mail the ads to Elsevier, 360 Park Avenue South, 9th floor, New York, NY 10010.

Advertisements may not be placed by telephone. Advertisements must be submitted at least 30 days preceding the publication. All ad placements must be confirmed by the AOA – do not assume your ad is running unless it has been confirmed. Cancellations and/or changes MUST be made prior to the closing date and must be made in writing and confirmed by the AOA. No phone cancellations will be accepted. Advertisements of a "personal" nature are not accepted. The AOA NEWS publishes 18 times per year(one issue only in January, June, July, August, November, and December, all other months, two issues.) and posting on the Web site will coincide with the AOA NEWS publication dates. Call Keida Spurlock - Elsevier ad sales contact - at 212.633.3986 for advertising rates for all classifieds and showcase ads

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Optometry's MEETING™
June 21-25, 2006

To list an event on the AOA Calendar, send information to EventCalendar@aoa.org or visit www.aoanews.org and click on Event Calendar

Visit the AOA Web site at www.aoa.org

CE In the Desert
Arizona Optometric Association Spring Congress
Hilton El Conquistador Resort, Tucson – May 4-7, 2006
18 hours COPE Approved CE
For More Information: 602-279-0055; 800-346-2020
Room Rate: $145 Single/Double; For accommodations, 800-HILTONS; Or 520-544-5000

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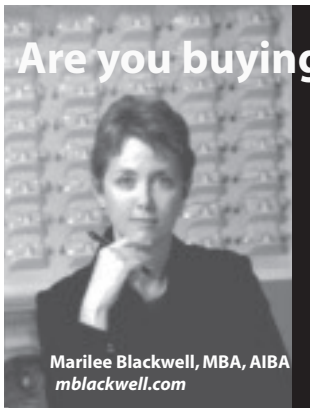

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Classifieds

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June Cheatham, COE
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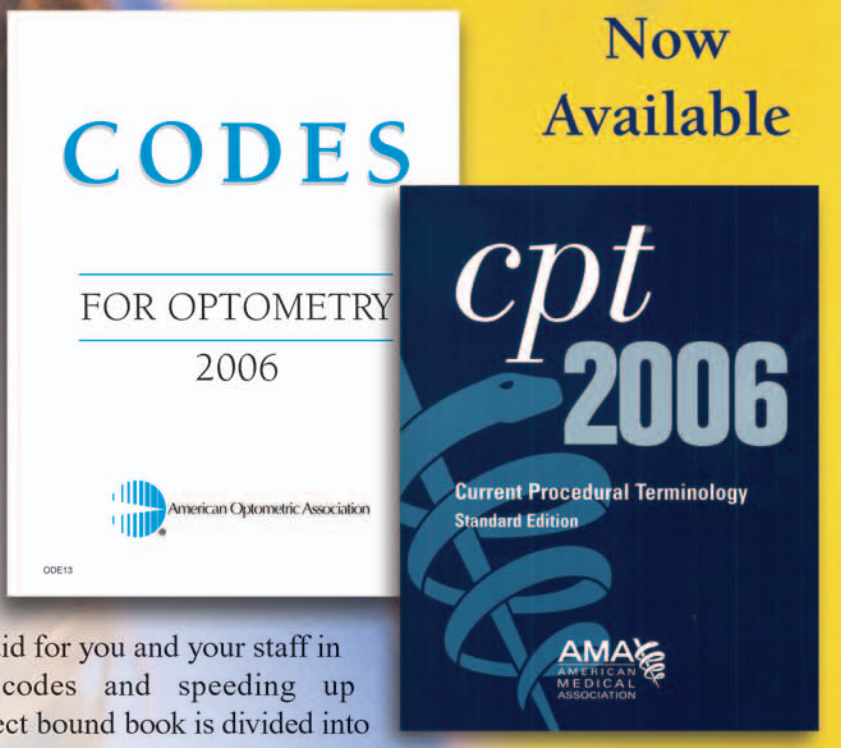
"The" Coding Tool For Your Optometric Practice



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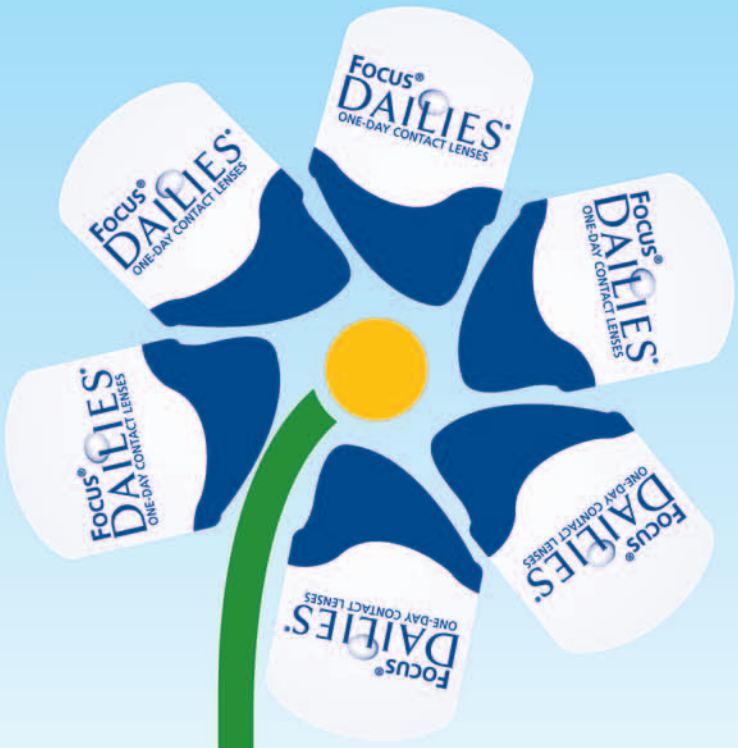

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1. Stiegemeier, MJ, Thomas, S. Seasonal Allergy Relief with Daily Disposable Lenses. Contact Lens Spectrum. 2001 (April): 24-28.

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